

Revising traditions & providing new strategies in mental health promotion

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Mental health is described by WHO as:

***... a state of well-being in which
the individual realizes his or her
own abilities, can cope with
the normal stresses of life,
can work productively and fruitfully,
and is able to make a contribution
to his or her community***

**No responsible organization
For mental health**

**Mental health promotion
Needs social & environmental
changes**

Inequity and health

There is an unprecedented opportunity to improve health among the poorest and most vulnerable people of the community. The health of marginalized populations, the role of women in social development and in health and the health of indigenous people in many localities are among some of the challenges that need to be taken into consideration.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Having a job is much more than 'a ticket to the bourgeois society'. It also affects a range of social, cultural, and psychological relationships . Therefore unemployment seems likely to have a number of effects, including increasing the risk of physical and mental illness

The communication revolution

Modern communication technology is becoming more and more affordable, but it requires skills that must be conquered by the people in order to become a democratic tool for health. Communication technologies have also brought messages from commercial sectors closer to homes even in the most remote rural communities. It is in the realm of health promotion to respond to the indirect and direct marketing of unhealthy products like tobacco, alcohol and unhealthy diet, but also marketing of generally unhealthy lifestyles and the exploitation of mainly girls and women for sexual purposes.

Media

STIGMA AND PUBLIC PREJUDICE

The media have an important role in reflecting and perpetuating the stereotypical view of the mentally ill as violent, unpredictable, dangerous and to be feared. Perceived dangerousness has been said to be the single most important factor contributing to the stigma of mental illness . In the news media, headlines often link mental illness to crime and such stories are often featured on the front page.

Mental health professionals are not immune from the process of stigma. Working in the mental health field carries with it a certain stigma among health professionals

The cultural misconception

Identity

**Interpersonal
relationship**

**Marriage &
family relations**

**Senile &
aging**

Minorities

Divorce

Values and religious beliefs

**Mental health promotion strategies should always
Consider social & cultural context
& pay attention to norms and values**

**Whenever a problem in a cultural context is appeared
It is not true to change the values system
as the first choice**

**Creative experts try to solve the problems
Scientifically
In their own culture**

Not imitation

Academic and professional efforts!!

Low level training

**Low quality
publication**

Pseudo professionals

Weak counselors

Research fallacy

Increasing and expanding democratization in countries

The last two decades have seen many countries with changes in political system and infrastructure moving towards more and more democratic development and their people wanting to take more active roles in various aspects of policy and socio-economic development. Such changes and concerns create a new context that should properly drive actions in health promotion especially with regards to creating healthy public policies

Globalization

The dynamics of globalization affects health in many ways: trade, tourism, physical and cultural environment, economic transactions, transports, production of goods and working environment. Like the communication revolution it has both positive and negative effects, and the opinion is split about its advantages and disadvantages. Undoubtedly, many people suffer from less poverty due to global economic growth and have substantially improved their standard of living

The threat of war and terrorism

Another threat to good health is the unsafe environment created by war and violence. Conflicts between groups in society continue with severity and have grown in some regions and increasingly they affect the civilian population, especially women and children. The Refugee population in the world has grown and does not show signs of reducing. The more recent threat of terrorism, both internationally and locally, posed another key barrier to health and health promotion efforts.

Controversies & paradoxes

Health Promotion Plan B

HEALTH PROMOTERS SHOULD TRY TO STOP PEOPLE SMOKING

Because

- Smoking causes sickness and shortens lives
- Smoking makes people unfit
- The medical treatment of smoking-related disease is expensive. Where such disease is treated by publicly funded medical services smoking incurs financial cost to the state
- Smoking leads to absenteeism and loss of productivity, and so incurs further cost to the state
- Smoking damages non-smokers, physically (through passive smoking) and economically (because of its cost to the state – a cost which is ultimately borne by the individual taxpayer)
- Smoking is unaesthetic (it stains) and unhygienic (it smells)

HEALTH PROMOTERS SHOULD TRY TO STOP PEOPLE SMOKING BY MEANS OF ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS

- *Education* – smokers should be presented with comprehensive evidence about the damage they do to themselves and others, and enabled to make fully informed choices
- *Training* – stop-smoking techniques should be freely and liberally available wherever people smoke. People should be given every opportunity to change their behaviours
- *Indoctrination* – anti-smoking propaganda should be widely distributed to counteract the marketing campaigns of the tobacco companies. It should be made plain that tobacco-related disease is to be feared (scary real life images should be used), and the huge profits that tobacco companies make as a result of their trade should be given maximum publicity – as black a picture as possible should be painted about the undesirable effects of smoking and the immorality of the tobacco industry
- *Legislation* – tobacco advertising should be banned, tobacco products should be taxed at a very high rate, smoking in public should be forbidden, smokers should be forced to bear the cost of all medical treatments made necessary by their smoking, smokers should be separated from non-smokers wherever possible
- *Prohibition* – smoking should be outlawed altogether

Health Promotion Plan A

HEALTH PROMOTERS SHOULD ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO SMOKE

Because

- Smoking helps people cope with life
- Promoting smoking will help the tobacco industry employ more people (it is well known that unemployment is a cause of ill-health)
- Smoking raises taxes which governments can elect to spend on health services
- Smoking reduces the level of chronic sickness in the elderly population because smokers tend to die sooner than non-smokers. Promoting smoking will lower the cost to the state of geriatric care
- Young people think smoking is cool – it makes them feel they belong, and a sense of belonging is very important for health
- Smoking is enjoyable – most smokers get pleasure out of smoking

HEALTH PROMOTERS SHOULD ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO SMOKE BY MEANS OF ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS

- *Campaigning for unrestricted advertising* – in a capitalist country it ought to be legal to advertise any product that it is legal to sell
- *Comprehensive advice on how to get the very most enjoyment from cigarette smoking* – what to smoke, what strength cigarette is best in which circumstances, when to use a filter and when not, how to roll your own, what the optimum frequency should be (this advice should be based on detailed scientific research undertaken by health promoters)
- *Advertising widely the many mental and social benefits that smoking offers*

Top-Down (Expert) or Bottom-Up (Community) Decision-Making

- Who decides what the health issues are?
- Who decides how to address these issues?
- Who benefits from these actions?
- Much of public health and health policy decisions are made by "experts" whose life experience may share little with those of the clients whose interests they are serving.
- Public health and health policy decisions may be based traditional models of health that may be too narrow in their outlook and not what citizens want.

Decision-making in health promotion should be influenced by at least three kinds of knowledge:

Instrumental knowledge is also known as traditional, scientific, positivist, quantitative, or experimental and is the dominant paradigm in health research

**Lay or Interactive knowledge derived from lived experience
Also known as constructivist, naturalistic, ethnographic, knowledge, its focus is on meanings and interpretations individuals provide to events.**

**Critical knowledge is reflective knowledge and is concerned
With the role that societal structures and power relations play in promoting inequalities and disabling people.**

Enough talk,,, let's play!!

